President.—There must be a sort of order.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—I only make a modest request.

President.—We cannot say on what particular day the motion will come.

Mr. A. B. Salem.—I only request for an adjournment of the motion which stands in my name on Saturday to another day.

President.—Let us now proceed with the General Discussion of the Budget.

The General Discussion of the Budget.

Mr. C. A. Kunjunni Raja.—The general discussion of the budget gives an opportunity to the Legislature to review the previous year's administration and to give guidance to the coming year. The State, whatever its form may be, monarchical or republican, should stand for the good and prosperity for the people in general. An ideal Government, according to modern democratic ideas, exists where the Legislature which is the epitome of the peoples' mind controls the Executive, which is to carry out the decisions of the Legislature, while the Judiciary is to keep the balance between the two and is to administer justice fearlessly between man and man. A year's experience of the new era of administration in Cochin which began with the inauguration of the Cochin Legislative Council makes me bold to say that the Legislature is only an ornamental toy in the hands of the Executive, while the Judiciary is admittedly for a long time occupying only a subordinate position in the body-politic of the State. A review of an year's administration after the inauguration of this Council will justify this statement of mine with regard to the relative position of the various bodies referred to above under the constitution of the Cochin Legislative Council.

The Council is competent to reduce grants, but is incompetent to propose a new grant or to alter the destination of a grant. Moreover, the Government has taken care too fence off innumerable heads of revenue and the expenditure as too sacred for the vote of this Council. "Thus far shalt thou go and no further" is printed in italics for our guidance. The last budget was passed by this Council without the reduction of a single item except the sum of rupee one on a token motion on the Excise policy of the State. A superficial observer may perhaps say that this fact indicates that the executive machinery is perfect, but to me it appears that the cause lies deeper, and everybody who contributes to this must feel ashamed of the performance.

Even at the risk of being misunderstood, I must strike a note of warning to my brother members of this Council. Ever

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

since the inception of the Council, we have been sailing adrift without the proper moorings and without any definite destination. A perceptible exchange of the fire between two great fortresses of communalism is being witnessed; all notions of a united Council have been cast to the four winds. And what are these warring legislators to do? They are to protect communal interests, but what does it mean in plain words? It only means that each community will try its best to retard the progress of the other, and both will combine to retard the progress of the country as a whole. In the meanwhile, the bureaucracy will thrive on the discomfiture of both the communities. Have we no commonsense to see what will happen, if communalism is let loose in the Council? This Council will be a consenting party for all the misdeeds of our bureaucracy. We, as representatives of the people, must try our best to stand on a common platform and to find a solution of the communal problems which are the curse of our country. The spirit of communalism which blinds men and which makes them inordinately selfish must be banished for ever. These differences, in my opinion, are not inherent in the communities themselves but are the results of certain communal machinations in the selection of candidates for the service of the State. Merit alone is to be the criterion for selection, and it will create efficiency and purity, and an atmosphere of sychophant loyalty with a single eye on favours will not be promulgated, and selfish and communal interests will not take root in the soil. The ideal state will be that in which the conflict of interests and privileges can be removed and a perfect harmony established between the warring communities now struggling for the loaves of office. Heaven grant that, hereafter at least, we work in concord one with another, rent by no unhealthy division. I cannot do better than to quote *in extenso* the wise words of our present high-minded Viceroy H. E. Lord Irwin. His Excellency said at the Chelmsford Club:—

"In the name of Indian national life, in the name of religion, I appeal to all in each of the two communities who hold the position, who represent them in the press, who direct the education of the young, who possess influence, who lead them in politics. I appeal in the name of national life, because communal tension is eating into it as canker. It has suspended its activities. It has ranged its component parts into hostile camps. I appeal in the name of religion, because I appeal to nothing nobler, and because religion is the language of the soul, and it is a change of soul that India needs to-day.....There can surely be no greater tragedy than that religion which should be the expression and the support of man's highest instincts should be prostitued by

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an alliance with actions through which those instincts are distorted and disgraced. Such a development, if it were unchecked, could only end in the infliction of a mortal wound upon human character, upon India, and upon the cause of that religion in whose guide it was allowed to masquerade."

This House need not be told that Cochin is essentially an agricultural country, and that irrigation systems form the arteries for the circulation of the life blood of agriculture. Most of the *chiras*, tanks and canals were constructed between 1840 and 1856, and since then nothing worth the name has been attempted or done, and most of the beds of the old tanks have considerably silted up, and some of the canals have fallen into disrepair. The ryots now depend on rain, and there is failure every now and then. With the growing pressure of population on the soil, the aid of artificial irrigation for increased production has become imperative. Our field of supply by nature is splendid, but our activities are not developed to make our rivers useful instruments in our hands. "In water and land level our rivers appear to be too excellent for irrigation works". This Council is aware of its resolution for the appointment of a Committee to lay down a policy of development of irrigation, and what became of it I shall bring to your notice in the words of Dis. No. 1097/D/01.

"The resolution as amended was discussed in the Council and passed by a non-official majority. The Government opposed it on the ground that there were already *numerous* committees being formed *for various purposes*, and that the one proposed in the resolution was *not likely to serve any important public purpose*. If, at some future time, any necessity arises, the question of constituting a specific committee like the one proposed will be considered. The Government do not, therefore, propose to give effect to the resolution at present."

I, for one, refuse to countenance by the appearances of a silent assent a proceeding so fatal to the prestige and usefulness of this Council. In the first place, is there, Sir, any logical connection between the development of irrigation and the existence of numerous committees for other purposes? Secondly, even if the hidden mind of the Government finds some logical connection between the two, why was not a word said with regard to the making of a liberal allotment for irrigation which was one of the important terms of the resolution. What were the various committees in existence, except the Special Finance Committee and the Excise Committee? Perhaps according to the Government the plural "two" denotes "numerous".

What has become of the resolutions regarding (1) the introduction of Hand-spinning in schools, (2) the compulsory teaching

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

of Temperance in schools, (3) the establishment of a Central Ayurvedic Hospital in the State,(4)the supply of Alwaye water to Mattancheri, (5) the establishment of a Cosmopolitan Hostel? Nothing has been done except to pass certain inconsequential orders in the case of some of these.

The Government do not seek to realise why the right of interpellation is given to the Council. Questions are intended not only to elicit information but to draw the attention of the Government to irregularities committed knowingly or unknowingly, and I must appeal to the good sense of the Government that there is no use of getting wild, if, in the discharge of the honest duties of a Councilior, sometimes painful revelations have to be made. Why has this Council been called into existence? Because the whims of bureaucracy will not always conform to the dictates of reason and justice without censure and restraint. The Council will be abdicating its functions, if it be a consenting party to the wrongs or misdeeds of the bureaucracy.

I heartily congratulate the Government for the appointment of a Special Finance Committee in pursuance of a general trend of opinion in the general discussion of the last year's budget. But the Committee has to be seriously blamed for the slow progress of its work, in fact, even for doing nothing till now. I must congratulate the Government again for the wide terms of reference to the Committee, and I pray that the labours of the Committee may come to fruition at an early date.

The Legislature being thus of no force in the State, the Executive is the chief factor of Cochin politics. The Diwan is the head of the Executive, and is responsible for the administration. The general administrative policy of our State has been changing as often as the State was changing its Diwans. This is the cause the executive government is not stable. It is seldom that the State has a definite policy in any department. To a large extent, it is a policy of drift. These short-timed Diwans, however competent and well-intentioned they may be, have neither the time nor the patience to study State conditions and problems, and inaugurate enduring measures and schemes calculated to improve permanently the economic welfare of the State and its people. Our foreign Diwans in their hurry to give a good account of themselves to the Paramount Power on whose pleasure depends their elevation to loftier heights, hatch and carry out schemes fascinating in paper, which, by their unique novelties and daring, strike the imagination of outsiders and the Paramount Power during the time of inception but subsequently become a drag on the State, sucking year after

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

year its scanty resources without even leaving a nominal margin for the vital development undertakings. Our Forest-Tramway, our Potteries and Tanneries are a few of the glaring samples bequeathed to us. The conciliation of our services is another common plan in their administrative policy which, in its cumulative effects in the matter of official pay and allowances has, become another hard nut crack to the financees of the State. Most of the nation-building departments are starved, and too much money is spent on public buildings. Our aim should be to evolve responsible government with a constitutional monarch. I wish to make it clear that in suggesting the desirability of a constitutional monarch no sort of reflection is meant on our present Maharaja who is quite exceptional in broad-mindedness in virtues and in benevolent and watchful care of his subjects. In the words of the Mysore Progressive Party: "We object to absolute monarchy as an institution, since it is impossible to guarantee an unbroken succession of equally good and wise rulers; powers unlimited by popular control will prove dangerous in the hands of wicked or weak rulers gamed by unscrupulous or short-sighted advisers. No doubt we are extremely fortunate that we have a succession of highly educated and respectable Princes to be our Rulers, but unfortunately for us, under the peculiar system of inheritance they are likely to come to the throne only at an advanced age when nature, who makes no distinctions, will naturally shirk all work, and man will long for ease and retreat from the busy world. Under such circumstances, the Diwan becomes a powerful instrument and becomes the absolute monarch. I cannot for any reason support the autocracy of the Diwan. For these reasons, the powers of the Diwan have to be controlled by an Executive Council which shall be made responsible to the Legislature. The Legislative Council should exercise full control over legislation and finances, including taxation and expenditure.

It is a great pity that one year's administration of the present Diwan is not very encouraging. Except that he has carried on the routine administration, he has not so far formulated any scheme of practical public utility to his credit. Is the Diwan only to sign routine papers and do nothing more? This is all the more regrettable in view of the high hopes that were raised, when His Highness the Maharaja was pleased to announce the choice of a son of the soil to the supreme post in the State. A new-comer, drafted to responsibility, has the disadvantage that he is a stranger to its bearings and often cannot resist the temptation, as a sort of shield to himself, of erecting a ring of isolation around his personality. With a Diwan drawn

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

from the soil of our State itself, there is no need for suspicious reticence nor any need for merely a technical view of official responsibility. Let me once more hope, as I did on the last occasion, that Rao Bahadur Mr. Narayana Ayyar is only taking stock of the situation, and will soon come out of the shell with the announcement of liberal changes and constructive reforms.

Being unfortunately a member of the Special Finance Committee, if I discuss the activities of the various departments of the executive government, I will be charged with prejudging issues before the Committee, and I shall not go into the subject on this occasion beyond making certain general observations. In all well-ordered States and in countries where there is responsible government, properly so-called, the financial condition of the government forms the index to the economic condition of the people. Let us for a moment examine the situation with reference to this dictum. The income as well as the expenditure of our Government has been increasing year after year. The income which was 45 lakhs about a dozen years ago has increased to 72 lakhs in the current year, showing an increase of 27 lakhs or over 60 per cent in round numbers. Can any one in this Council or outside honestly say that there has been a corresponding improvement in the general economic condition of the people. As every school boy or school girl knows, there was during the current year a total failure of the *Kole* cultivation. The loss of the people concerned is a stupendous one, but we know for certain that there has not been the slightest diminution in the revenue accounts of the Government under this head. The same is the case in large areas in the Southern Taluks affected by the cocoanut pest. Without looking further, these familiar illustrations suffice to indicate that there is not only no necessary relation between the economic condition of the Government and that of the people, but that it is almost in an inverse ratio in Cochin. What with recurring failure of crops and other causes, existence itself is becoming intolerable to the people. The Government sits insensible to the ebb and flow of national calamity. Again, most of us coming from different parts of the State know the condition of our public roads through which we have travelled. There are roads and roads through which it is impossible without risk to take a conveyance or even to go on foot. The road repair work which ought to have commenced with the commencement of the monsoon has been in a state of neglect. But who is to question and who has questioned the authorities concerned? Enormous sums year after year are provided in the budget for the repair and maintenance of public roads. Where, when

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

and how they are spent appears to be nobody's concern to question or to know. Most of the departments of administration except the Department of Revenue to some extent, irresistably bid fare to attain this state of demoralisation and immunity from effective supervision. It is not our fault, Sir, if our minds are not excited or elevated to the adoration and praise of the Government. Is there in Cochin, after all, a responsible government, properly so-called? It becomes, therefore, the duty of this Council to resuscitate and enthrone it on a constitutional basis. My brother Councillors will agree with me when I say that our State is sufficiently well advanced in Education. An Executive Council responsible to the Legislature is an imperative necessity. I also feel prophetically that the present time is the most opportune for the successful evolution of a responsible Executive Council in as much as we have in our Sovereign a Ruler who is all love and sympathy and in our Diwan a worthy son of the soil who, when stripped of his official environments, can only be one with us in all our political aspirations. We have now only to make a united stand and, God willing, we have every hope to succeed.

The independence of the Judiciary should be made as far secure as possible against direct or indirect interference with the natural course of justice by the Executive. The Judges of the Chief Court should never be given any higher post, and the subordinate Judiciary should be recruited by the Chief Court.

Fully autonomous Village Panchayats with civil, criminal and revenue jurisdictions should be brought into existence, and every encouragement given to them to function successfully. The service should be recruited by a competitive examination or by a Staff Selection Board.

Dr. A. G. Menon.—Sir, we have now completed the first year of the life of our Legislative Council, and before we enter into the discussion of the budget for the coming year 1102, I should like to offer a few words of general comment. I am glad to say that the present budget is a vast improvement on the last year's. I offer my thanks to the Government for placing a memorandum on the budget this year, instead of a mere jumble of figures more to confuse than to elucidate.

I take this opportunity to thank you, Sir, for the kind regard that you have shown towards us for the past one year, and hope the same cordial relationship will subsist between you and the members of the Council in future also. True as this Legislative Council is quite new, we were beset with difficulties everywhere, but you have steered the ship, avoiding the dangerous places for the past one year, and hence, please accept our thanks for the same.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

Sir, you have given us an opportunity to discuss the Cranganur budget this year. You have appointed a Retrenchment Committee, which the State was very badly and urgently in need of. We are grateful to you for the same. I am anxiously waiting for their Report, which, I am sure, will give us valuable help in discussing the details of our next financial proposals.

I would add here that separate Reports, published by the Government, of the Departments of Agriculture and Panchayats, and Education, have been of great help to us, and we hope, that the other departments will follow suit

I would now point out some of the difficulties we the non-official members are labouring under, and to which we earnestly hope you would pay your best attention.

A. Balloting of Resolutions—S. O. No. 6 (2).—According to the rules and practice in this Council, only numbers of the resolutions are ballotted, and hence, while a member would get an opportunity of addressing the Council a number of times, the other members would get no opportunity at all Further, in many cases members are obliged to deal with unimportant subjects, to their great reluctance, in preference to important ones, for they are compelled to follow the ballotted order. It would be well, if the Standing Orders and the rules framed by the President thereunder are amended, and instead of the numbers of the resolutions, the names of the members are ballotted so that each member could avail himself of a chance to move at least one resolution during the life-time of the Council. I clearly placed this point before you, Sir, in January last, and submitted certain amendments to the Standing Orders. But you have overruled them, saying that the amendments were not amendments of Standing Orders but of the rules framed thereunder by the President. I bowed to the decision. But I appeal again to you, Sir, and request that the rules may be altered on the lines of the Standing Orders of the Madras Legislative Council.

B. Supplementary Questions.—As the rules now stand, only the member who puts a question is allowed to ask supplementary questions, and the other members are debarred from asking supplementary questions. In the Madras Legislative Council, the whole House can take part in the discussions on the supplementary questions which is well-known to you. Sir, I am conscious that official members

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

might, in certain cases, be put to inconvenience and, in certain cases, to some worry too. Sir, to protect their interests a very effective remedy is already provided in the rules in the word "Notice". So it is well that the five words "who has asked a question", from Rule 14, are deleted, and thereby you will show your willingness to further develop the usefulness of the Council.

C. Appointment in the State.—Sir, I am obliged to say that the feeling in the State is very strong that in the last two or three years the Government have been going on in a very extravagant manner in the matter of appointments made without reference to the necessities of the services or the capacity of the tax-payer to bear the expenditure involved. I pointed out clearly in the last budget speech that the creation of the new appointment in the Medical Department then—an additional Civil Surgeon—to the already existing top-heavy establishment was anyhow an unnecessary burden thrown on the poor helpless tax-payer. Over and above this, such appointments produce discontent in the services also. Another suggestion that I should like to make in this connection is that a statement of new appointments created every year should invariably be appended to the Financial Statement. Then only, Sir, we would be in a position to know the growth of recurring expenditure from year to year.

I know pass on to some of the departments.

(a) Agricultural Department.—This department is before the eye of every member here. We all know that enterprises undertaken by the Government cannot be run on the same level as those by private concerns. It must be obvious to the Council that in the initial stages a directing agency always costs relatively more than at subsequent stages. It is then to organise, and comparisons of relative cost are out of place until the organisation has been completed. In all experimental departments, the chief aim is to educate the people, and not merely to earn dividends. It is perfectly true that experiments sometimes may not result in any appreciable progress within a desirable period of time. It is still more true that no progress is possible without continuous experiments. The very term "experiment" shows that there is no guarantee of success, and to turn round and blame the Government for conducting experiments which have not proved a success so far is to misunderstand the very object of experiments. I was very glad to go through a full Report on Agriculture and Panchayats for 1100, published and circulated among the Council members this time.

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